

methods such as discriminatory product standards and testing methods to control their ceramic tile imports and, in some cases, to divert ceramic tile manufactured in third countries over to the U.S. market by imposing restrictions on those third country exports to the EU.

I am in support of the reauthorization of the GSP Program and trust that import-sensitive products such as tile will not be subject to GSP.

MORE THAN A DIFFERENCE OF DEGREES

HON. GEORGE P. RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 31, 1995

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, a respected leader of California's agriculture community, Bill Mattos, has hit the nail on the head. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, the rule he rightly ridicules is one that tolerates as fresh chicken sold to consumers that is frozen so stiff it could drive nails.

For the enlightenment of our colleagues and to illustrate once again the folly of letting frozen masquerade as fresh, because that is what Government says, I take pleasure in presenting the following editorial expression by Mr. Mattos that was published in the Capital Press Agriculture Weekly on October 27, 1995.

POULTRY LABEL CHARADE CONFIRMS PUBLIC'S CYNICISM ABOUT POLITICS
(By Bill Mattos)

When is a frozen chicken fresh?

One newspaper says, "When it's got the political muscle of the 800-pound gorilla that is the poultry lobby."

I guess that's the same frozen poultry thawed on its way to California from some of the nation's largest poultry processors.

Believe it or not, Congress spent more than four hours recently debating chicken labeling, then barred the U.S. Department of Agriculture from enforcing truth in labeling.

Congress just doesn't get it. Voter anger, so visibly demonstrated in the last two federal elections, was not simply about one party vs. the other. Rather, it was directed at the status quo—a sense that in Washington, the concerns of deep-pocketed special interests outweigh the common good.

Recent action in both the House and Senate shows the lengths members will go to please special interests. In the midst of hefty debate on a welfare "revolution" and Medicare "overhaul," Congress found it necessary to vote on whether chicken that has been frozen to rock-solid temperatures can be thawed and called "fresh."

After weeks of serious debate, with California's representatives arguing the merits of freshness, Congress decided that yes, indeed, it should be legal to label defrosted poultry as "fresh."

This legislative squawking is ludicrous. But it means serious, added profits to a few big chicken producers in the Southeast who use these "fresh" labels to sell chicken to unsuspecting consumers nationwide at a higher price.

Consumers who buy fresh food believe it has never been frozen. That's why USDA officials in August announced that chicken producers can no longer put deceptive "fresh" labels on poultry that has been iced to below 26 degrees, and subsequently thawed for sale in grocery stores.

USDA policymakers didn't create this rule overnight. Two years ago, they began study-

ing the issue. They tested the freezing point of poultry—and discovered the meat becomes crystallized at 26 degrees. They held field hearings in cities throughout the country. They drafted a rule and published it in the Federal Register to solicit public comments.

And the public responded: USDA's mailbox received thousands of letters from irate consumers, all of the leading consumer advocacy organizations, as well as chefs, who felt the rule was important enough for them to write in.

Congress held its own hearings, which included testimony by noted chef Wolfgang Puck, who pounded a so-called "fresh" chicken that was rock-solid on a table in front of a House committee. Members participated in chicken bowling with "fresh" chickens that were hard as bowling balls.

The point consumers were trying to make was simple: A "fresh" chicken has never been frozen. Shoppers in search of fresh vegetables bypass the freezer case and go to the produce department. Likewise, those in search of fresh seafood head straight for the lobster tank. So why on earth did the Senate vote to provide an exception for poultry?

The answer: It puts lots of dollars in the pockets of giant poultry corporations in a few states like Arkansas and Mississippi, and costs 40 cents to \$2 more per pound for consumers who buy this "fresh" (actually, thawed) chicken.

Southeastern senators whose constituents include the largest chicken-producing conglomerates went to the Senate floor to say it was them vs. California, a state where consumers purchase lots of fresh chicken. Maybe they had a point—but only on the Senate floor. Off the Capitol grounds, it was the Senate vs. millions of consumers, and consumers lost.

In fact, the vote in the Senate was 61 to 38 in favor of defrauding consumers. Senators from the frozen-chicken states locked arms and relied on the old network to reverse a scientifically based USDA rule that was two years in the making. Subsequent objections to this ridiculousness raised elsewhere in Congress were overruled.

Kudos to Sen. Thad Cochran, R-Miss., and Sen. Dale Bumpers, D-Ark., or this legislative feat. Cochran is the chairman of the Senate subcommittee on Agriculture Appropriations, the panel that holds the purse strings for the USDA. He got the ball rolling by slipping language into an appropriations bill before his committee that would prevent the department from using its funding to implement or enforce its truth-in-labeling rule.

But it was Bumpers who, during debate in the Senate, revealed the true thrust of the big chicken lobby's argument: economics. He said it was difficult to ship chickens from Arkansas without freezing them, claiming that "economically, that is not doable." So in pursuant to additional profits for several large companies, Congress overruled conventional scientific wisdom.

These actions typify what is wrong with Washington. The Congress overturned in a matter of weeks a pro-consumer, common-sense ruling by the USDA that took two years and many hours of public input, to make.

In the end, Congress chickened out and voted for the best interests of special interests, hoping consumers didn't notice.

Well, consumers and fresh poultry producers did notice, and we were disgusted.

This isn't a choice between fresh and frozen. It's a choice between consumers' interests and hard-ball politics as usual. What will it be, Washington?

SCHWARTZ, KARSIF & CO., P.C.
MARKS 35 YEARS OF SERVICE

HON. JON D. FOX

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 31, 1995

Mr. FOX. Mr. Speaker, when Bill Karsif and Sid Schwartz decided to enter into an accounting partnership, the two CPAs flipped a coin to determine the name of the firm. Sid Schwartz won the toss.

Since that time, some 35 years ago, Sidney A. Schwartz and William Karsif, both 67, have never looked back and have been consistently progressive in operating this CPA and financial planning corporation which still carries their names.

Schwartz, Karsif & Co., P.C., currently has offices at the Executive News, Building L, 2300 Computer Avenue, in Willow Grove, PA.

These two talented CPAs who have specialized in providing accounting services and financial planning for small businesses, will mark their 35th anniversary together on December 12 of this year with a special reception for all of their clients, business associates, and friends.

The two became friendly as a result of their membership in the Adelphi Lodge of B'nai B'rith and their neighborhood association in the East Oak Lane section of Philadelphia.

Schwartz is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania Wharton School and Karsif is a graduate of Temple University. Both are members of the American and Pennsylvania Institutes of CPAs. Schwartz is also a certified financial planner and is active in the CFP Institute.

When they decided to form a partnership, Karsif was working in his own private practice and teaching at Pierce Business School, while Schwartz was also in his own private practice. Schwartz teases about earning \$40 per week back then, while Karsif muses about earning \$5 per hour.

The two businessmen joined together with one small office located in Center City Philadelphia and an office in the Mt. Airy section. "We knew that together we could offer better services for our clients," they note.

Through the decades that followed, their general accounting practice grew from the original partners, with one junior accountant and a secretary, to a multimillion dollar professional corporation with 24 professionals plus clerical and support staff.

SK&Co grew and acquired an expertise in many areas of small businesses including scrap metals, commercial contract cleaning services, commercial and residential real estate and construction, professional corporation in medicine and law, manufacturing, laboratory research, boarding homes, and personal care facilities. Their current client list spans businesses and corporations in some 25 States.

The firm has expanded its offices three times since its inception in 1961, moving to Cheltenham, PA, in 1971; Rydal, PA, in 1982; and finally to its spacious modern office complex in Willow Grove.

Schwartz says that the company was one of the first to run personal income tax forms on an in-house computer system and has never farmed out client work to outside service bureaus, specifically to maintain absolute confidentiality.